

NOAA FISHERIES FACT SHEET

Answers to Commonly Asked Amendment 13 Questions



Regulated Species: Atlantic cod, witch flounder, American plaice, yellowtail flounder, haddock, pollock, winter flounder, windowpane flounder, redfish, and white hake



NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Amendment 13 was developed by the New England Fishery Management Council, primarily to end overfishing on all groundfish stocks and to rebuild all groundfish stocks that are overfished. On May 1, 2004, National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) regulations implementing the amendment will take effect. This eight-page

insert is intended to be an easy-to-read reference to some of the changes taking place under Amendment 13. It is a practical guide and it is not intended to replace the official regulations. Because these regulations could affect all vessels, all federal permit holders and federally permitted dealers should get a copy of the complete, official regulations. You can

also request a copy of the regulations by calling NOAA Fisheries Sustainable Fisheries Division at 978-281-9315 and the New England Fishery Management Council office at 978-465-0492, or the text can be downloaded from the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Region Amendment 13 homepage at: <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/amend13/>



Days-At-Sea Baseline

- Q:** What is my Days-at-sea (DAS) baseline?
- A:** Your DAS baseline represents the level of recent historic fishing activity of your Northeast (NE) multispecies DAS permit and is used to calculate your DAS allocations. Specifically, the DAS baseline is the maximum DAS used in a fishing year during 1996 through 2001 (May 1, 1996, through April 30, 2002), not to exceed the vessel's annual DAS allocation prior to August 1, 2002, in which the vessel landed at least 5,000 lb or more of regulated species.
- Q:** Can Vessel Trip Reports (VTRs) be used to determine the 5,000 lb criteria for my DAS baseline?
- A:** No. A qualifying year is one in which a vessel landed 5,000 lb or more of regulated species based upon landings reported through dealer reports submitted to NOAA Fisheries prior to April 30, 2003. All landings are counted in live weight.
- Q:** Do the DAS that I used during years in which I did not catch at least 5,000 lb of regulated species count toward my DAS baseline?
- A:** Only DAS that were used during fishing years 1996 through 2001 in which 5,000 lb of regulated species were landed may be counted towards the DAS baseline.
- Q:** Do carry-over DAS fished count toward my DAS baseline?
- A:** No. The Amendment 13 DAS baseline established for each vessel may not exceed the vessel's annual allocation prior to August 1, 2002, despite whether the vessel fished more DAS in a particular year due to a carry-over or participation in the Large Mesh permit category, for example.

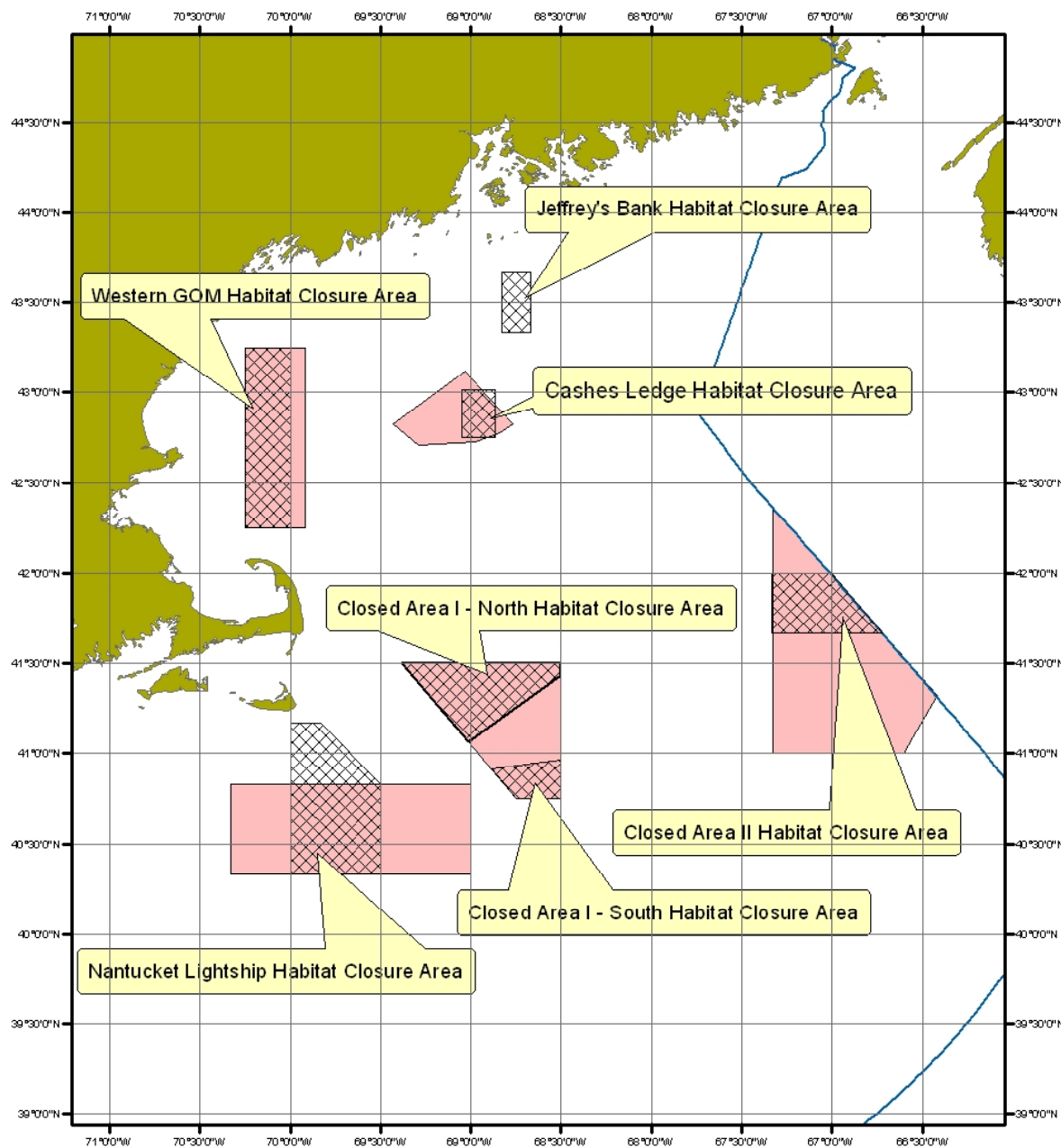
Days-At-Sea Allocation

- Q:** What are A, B, and C DAS?
- A:** Amendment 13 implements three types of DAS. Category A DAS are similar to DAS allocated prior to Amendment 13 and can be used without additional restrictions just as you fished prior to Amendment 13. Category B DAS may be used only under certain conditions and restrictions, and C DAS may not be used at the current time.
- Q:** I was allocated zero A DAS. Is there a way I can receive Category A DAS if I prove that I was unable to fish during fishing years 1996 through 2001 due a medical condition or other hardship?
- A:** Amendment 13 does not provide a mechanism that would allow reconsideration of a vessel's DAS allocation due to hardship. However, under Amendment 13, a vessel may obtain DAS from another vessel through the DAS Leasing or DAS Transfer Programs.
- Q:** I believe there is an error in the number of DAS that were allocated to me. What should I do?
- A:** If you believe that NOAA Fisheries made an error in your DAS allocation, you may submit a letter requesting a correction to the Regional Administrator. If you choose to request a correction, you should describe in writing why you believe an error was made, and provide credible evidence to support your claim.
- Q:** How many Category A, B, and C DAS is my vessel allocated?
- A:** For fishing years 2004 and 2005, Category A DAS equals 60 percent of your DAS baseline, and Category B DAS equals 40 percent of your DAS baseline. For fishing years 2006 through 2008, unless otherwise determined, A DAS will equal 55 percent of your DAS baseline, and B DAS will equal 45 percent of your DAS baseline. As of the 2009 fishing year, unless otherwise determined, A DAS will equal 45 percent of your DAS baseline, and B DAS will equal 55 percent of your DAS

baseline. Your C DAS allocation is the difference between your DAS baseline and the vessel's DAS allocation as of May 1, 2001.

- Q:** So if I had a Fleet DAS permit (88 DAS) last year and my Amendment 13 DAS baseline equals 50 DAS, how many DAS do I get to fish in 2004?
- A:** For fishing year 2004 (and 2005) you will be allocated 30 Category A DAS (50 DAS X 60 percent), 20 Category B DAS (50 DAS X 40 percent) and 38 Category C DAS (88 DAS - 50 DAS). See below for information on how you may fish the different DAS categories.
- Q:** How many B Regular DAS, and B Reserve DAS am I allocated?
- A:** Category B DAS equals 40 percent, 45 percent, and 55 percent of your DAS baseline beginning in fishing years 2004, 2006, and 2009, respectively, and are equally divided between B Regular and B Reserve DAS. Therefore, for fishing years 2004 and 2005, B Regular and B Reserve DAS will each equal 20 percent of your DAS baseline. For fishing years 2006 through 2008, B Regular and B Reserve DAS will each equal 22.5 percent of your DAS baseline. As of the 2009 fishing year, B Regular and B Reserve DAS will each equal 27.5 percent of your DAS baseline.
- Q:** How will I be able to fish my DAS?
- A:** Category A DAS may be used without additional restrictions, similar to how you fished DAS prior to Amendment 13; Category B DAS (Regular or Reserve) may only be used in approved Special Access Programs (SAPs) that allow the use of B DAS, i.e., the Closed Area II (CA II) Yellowtail Flounder SAP; and Category C DAS may not be used unless allowed through a future Council action. Other use of B Regular and B Reserve DAS may be proposed by a future Council action, for which you will be notified.

NE Multispecies Amendment 13 Habitat Closure Areas



New Permit Categories

- Q:** In fishing year 2003, I held a Fleet DAS permit category. Now that I have an individual DAS allocation, does my permit category change?
- A:** Yes. All vessels that previously held either a limited access Fleet DAS or Large Mesh Fleet DAS permit category will automatically be reassigned to the Individual DAS and Large Mesh Individual DAS permit categories, respectively.
- Q:** May I change my permit category?
- A:** Yes. You have 45 days from the time of issuance of your Amendment 13 limited access permit category to submit an application requesting a change.

Habitat Closures Areas

- Q:** Does Amendment 13 implement new closed areas?
- A:** Yes. There are 7 new Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Closure Areas to minimize impacts of the groundfish fishery on EFH: Jeffrey's Bank Habitat Closure Area, Cashes Ledge Habitat Closure Area, Western Gulf of Maine (WGOM) Habitat Closure Area, Closed Area I North Habitat Closure Area, Closed Area I South Habitat Closure Area, Closed Area II Habitat Closure Area, and Nantucket Lightship Habitat Closure Area. With the exception of the Jeffrey's Bank Habitat Closure Area, all, or portions, of the EFH Closure Areas, are within the boundaries of the current groundfish closed areas (see chart).

- Q:** Who is prohibited from fishing in the new EFH Closure Areas?
- A:** All vessels fishing with bottom-tending mobile gear are prohibited from fishing in the EFH Closure Areas. Bottom-tending mobile gear is defined as gear which comes into contact with the ocean bottom, and towed from a vessel, which is moved through the water during fishing in order to capture fish, and includes otter trawls, beam trawls, hydraulic dredges, non-hydraulic dredges, and seines (with the exception of a purse seine).

- Q:** Does any portion of the groundfish WGOM Closure Area remain open to shrimp trawl gear?
- A:** Yes, the eastern portion of the WGOM Closure Area that does not coincide with the area covered by the WGOM Habitat Closure Area remains open to shrimp trawl gear.

- Q:** If the groundfish closure areas are eliminated or modified in a future Council action, would the EFH Closure Areas within these areas change as well?

- A:** No, not necessarily. Although the EFH Closure Areas could be modified through Council action, these closure areas are closed specifically to protect habitat and would not automatically be changed should the groundfish closure areas change.

- Q:** Is it better to fish my B Regular or B Reserve DAS first?

- A:** Under Amendment 13, there is only one approved SAP where vessels may fish their B DAS (either B Regular or B Reserve DAS). This is the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP. Should Framework Adjustment 40 (a framework currently being developed by the New England Fishery Management Council that may provide additional areas for the use of B DAS) be approved and implemented during the 2004 fishing year, it may adopt opportunities for vessels to fish a B Regular DAS outside of a SAP. If this occurs, there may be some advantages to fishing B Reserve DAS first. Because this framework may include a requirement that a vessel maintain a balance of A DAS in order to fish a B Regular DAS outside of a SAP, it may be important to save, to the extent possible, both B Regular and A DAS. However, it is important to caution that this action, if approved, would not likely provide any opportunities to use a B Regular DAS outside of a SAP until late in the fishing year, if at all.

- Q:** Will I ever be able to use my C DAS?

- A:** The Council could consider allowing C DAS to be fished in the future, if the condition of the groundfish stocks warrant it.

- Q:** If I do not receive any Category A DAS, do I need to call NOAA Fisheries and declare my 20-day spawning block out of the groundfish fishery?

- A:** Vessels that received an Amendment 13 allocation of A or B DAS must comply with the spawning season restriction and call their 20-day block out of the groundfish fishery. However, vessels that have been allocated C DAS only are exempt from this call-in requirement since they do not have any available DAS to fish.

Carry-Over

- Q:** May I carry-over DAS from the 2003 fishing year into the 2004 fishing year (beginning May 2004)?

- A:** Yes. However, all DAS carried over from the 2003 fishing year into the 2004 fishing year will be considered as Regular B DAS. Beginning May 1, 2005, vessels may carry over Category A, B Regular, and B Reserve DAS in the following order: Category A DAS will be carried over first, followed by B Regular, then B Reserve DAS, with a cumulative maximum number of 10 DAS allowed to be carried over.

U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding

Q: What is the U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding?

A: Because Georges Bank (GB) cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder reside in both U.S. and Canadian waters, the two countries have reached an understanding through a U.S./Canada Resource Sharing Understanding (Understanding) to share these stocks and limit the amount of fish each country may catch. Amendment 13 adopts specific restrictions and conditions to ensure that the U.S. fish limits are not exceeded in the U.S. portion of the U.S./Canada Management Area (see chart).

Q: How much of these 3 stocks does the U.S. get to catch?

A: For the 2004 fishing year, U.S. vessels may catch up to the following amounts of the U.S./Canada shared stocks: 300 mt of GB cod, 5,100 mt of GB haddock, and 6,000 mt of GB yellowtail flounder.

Q: What are the conditions and restrictions that my vessel must abide by in the U.S./Canada Management Area?

A: The U.S./Canada Management Area is divided into the Eastern and Western U.S./Canada Area. All groundfish DAS vessels fishing under a groundfish DAS in either of these areas must fish with an approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and, prior to leaving the dock, declare through the VMS which area the vessel will be fishing in. In addition, you must notify NOAA Fisheries' Observer Program at least 5 working days prior to the start of a fishing trip in order to provide an opportunity to place an observer

aboard the vessel. You may reach the Observer Program by calling (508)-990-9057.

Q: What are the reporting requirements when fishing in the U.S./Canada Management Area?

A: In addition to the current VTR, you will be required to report the catch and discards of shared stocks through your VMS. If you have declared into the Western U.S./Canada Area you are required to submit a daily report of the catch and discards of yellowtail flounder through the VMS. If you have declared into the Eastern U.S./Canada Area you are required to submit a daily report of the catch and discards of cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder through the VMS. Please refer to the VMS instructions sent to you by NOAA Fisheries (you may also access this information on the NE Regional Office web page at: <http://www.nero.nmfs.gov>).

Q: Can I fish in both the Eastern U.S./Canada Area and the Western U.S./Canada Area on the same trip?

A: No. You are not allowed to fish in both the Eastern U.S./Canada Area and the Western U.S./Canada Area on the same trip.

Q: Are there special gear requirements that apply to the U.S./Canada Management Area?

A: Yes. If you are fishing in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area, you must fish with either a haddock separator trawl or a flatfish net. You may have both of these nets on board simultaneously, but no other type of net may be on board the vessel if you are fishing in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area.

Q: What are the cod trip limits?

A: For vessels fishing in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area, there is a cod trip limit of 500 lb per DAS,

up to 5,000 lb per trip, not to exceed 5 percent of the total catch on board, whichever is less. For vessels fishing in the Western U.S./Canada Management Area you are subject to the same cod trip limit rules as vessels that are not fishing in the U.S./Canada Area. (i.e., if you are enrolled in the GOM trip limit exemption program you may land 1,000 lb per DAS, up to 10,000 lb per trip).

Q: Will I receive steaming time credit when fishing in the U.S./Canada Management Area?

A: For groundfish DAS vessels that declare through VMS (prior to leaving port) that they will be fishing in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area, DAS will not be counted until they cross into the Eastern U.S./Canada Area. Similarly, when vessels fishing in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area leave this area, their DAS will no longer accrue. In other words, vessels will not be charged DAS to and from the Eastern U.S./Canada Area.

Q: What happens when the GB cod or GB haddock TAC is reached?

A: When the GB cod or haddock Total Allowable Catch (TAC) is reached, NE multispecies DAS vessels may not fish in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area. There is one exception to this rule: Vessels may continue to fish in the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP (which is within the Eastern U.S./Canada Area), if the yellowtail TAC has not yet been harvested.

Q: What happens when the GB yellowtail flounder TAC is reached?

A: When the yellowtail flounder TAC has been harvested, no vessel fishing in either the Western U.S./Canada Area or Eastern U.S./Canada Area may possess yellowtail flounder and the Eastern U.S./Canada Area would close to all groundfish DAS vessels.

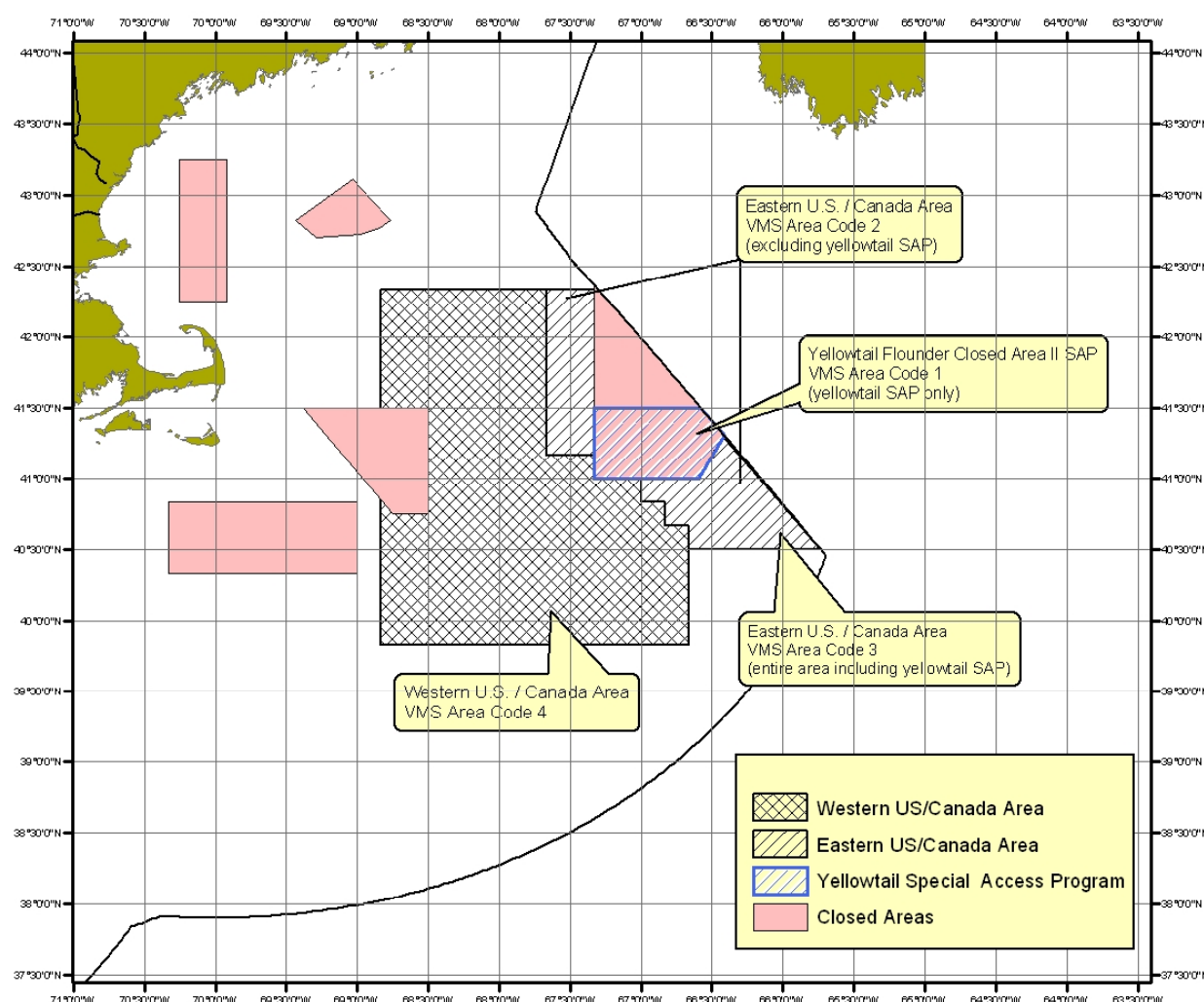
Special Access Programs (SAPs)

Q: What is a SAP?

A: A SAP is a specialized fishery that exempts vessels from certain regulations (e.g., closed area) in order to fish for stocks of groundfish that are in relatively good condition. A SAP has specific restrictions associated with it (seasonal restrictions, catch limits, gear requirements, etc.) in order to minimize the catch of groundfish stocks of concern, and bycatch. Unless otherwise restricted, vessels may use Category A or B DAS to fish in a SAP.

Q: What SAPs are allowed under Amendment 13?

A: Amendment 13 implements the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP and the Southern New England (SNE)/Mid-Atlantic (MA) Winter Flounder SAP.



CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP

Q: What are the rules for the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP?

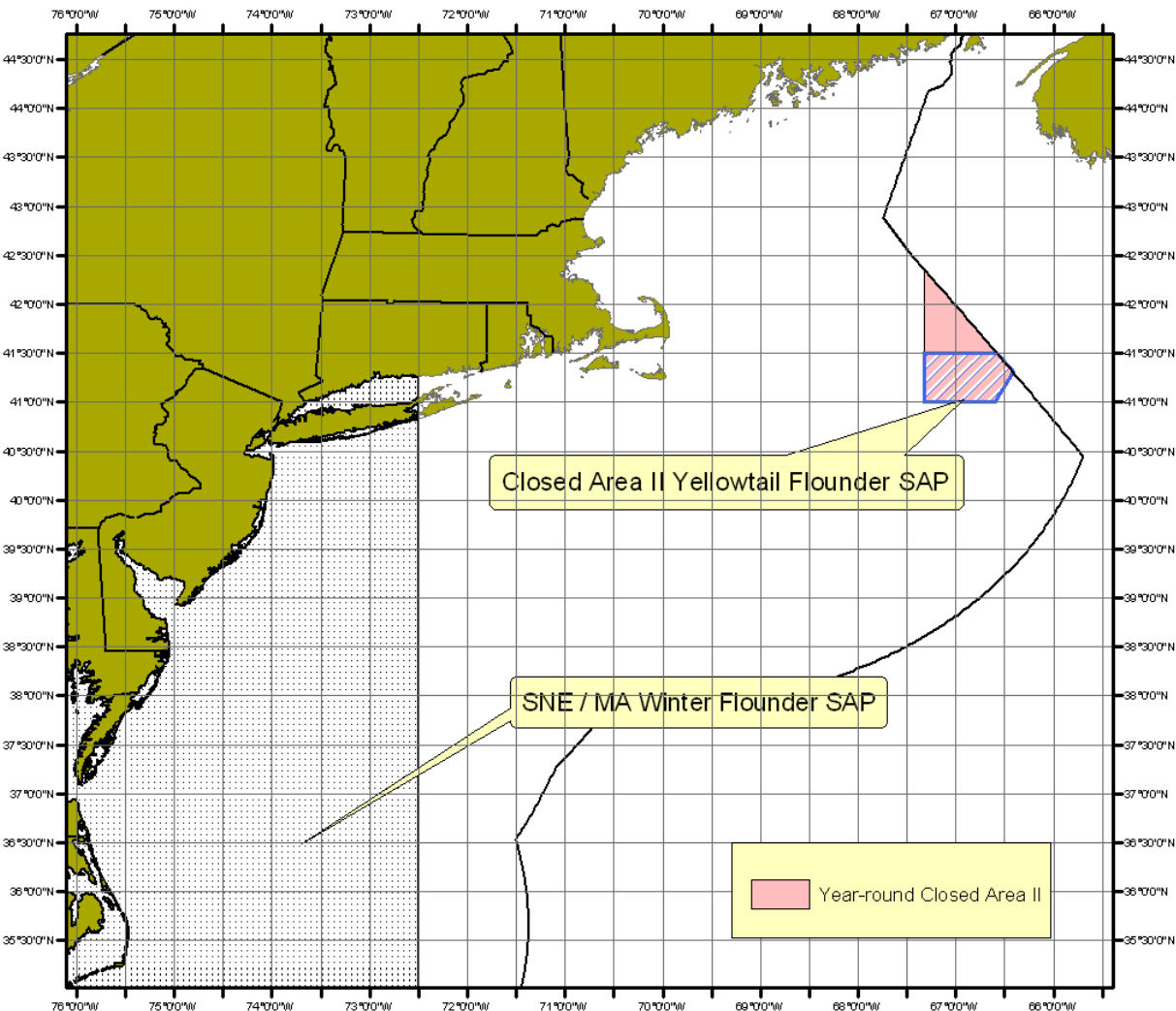
A: Groundfish DAS vessels fishing in the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP must abide by the rules of the Eastern U.S./Canada Management Area (see above), because this SAP is located within the Eastern U.S./Canada Management Area. In addition, participating vessels are allowed 2 trips per month during the months of June through December and may harvest up to 30,000 lb of yellowtail flounder per trip and 100 lb of cod per DAS, up to 1,000 lb per trip (not to exceed 5 percent of the total catch on board, whichever is less). Vessels may fish under their Category A, B Regular, or B Reserve DAS when fishing in this SAP.

Q: Am I guaranteed two trips per month into the SAP from June through December?

A: No, not necessarily. There is maximum of 320 trips total that the fishery may make into the SAP. Unless otherwise authorized, the Regional Administrator will close access to the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP when 320 trips have been attained or when the U.S./Canada yellowtail TAC has been harvested. The Regional Administrator may implement other limitations in order to prevent the yellowtail TAC from being exceeded.

SNE/MA Winter Flounder SAP

Q: What are the rules when participating in the SNE/MA Winter Flounder SAP?



YELLOWTAIL FLOUNDER TRIP LIMITS (Applies to limited access DAS vessels and limited access and open access Handgear permits fishing outside of the CA II Yellowtail Flounder SAP)		
	Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine Yellowtail Flounder Area	Southern New England/ Mid-Atlantic Yellowtail Flounder Area
January	750 pounds per DAS 3,000 pounds per trip	750 pounds per DAS 3,000 pounds per trip
February		
March		
April	250 pounds per trip	250 pounds per trip
May		
June		
July	750 pounds per DAS 3,000 pounds per trip	750 pounds per DAS 3,000 pounds per trip
August		
September		
October	250 pounds per trip	750 pounds per DAS 3,000 pounds per trip
November		
December	750 pounds per DAS 3,000 pounds per trip	

A: The SNE/MA Winter Flounder SAP allows limited access NE multispecies vessels fishing for summer flounder west of 72° 30' W. latitude to retain and land up to 200 lb of winter flounder while not under a NE multispecies DAS, provided the vessel possesses a valid summer flounder permit, the total amount of winter flounder on board does not exceed the amount of summer flounder on board; the vessel does not fish under a NE multispecies DAS; and the vessel does not possess any regulated species other than winter flounder.

DAS Leasing Program

DAS Lessor: the NE multispecies limited access vessel owner and/or the associated vessel that transfers the use of DAS to another NE multispecies limited access vessel.

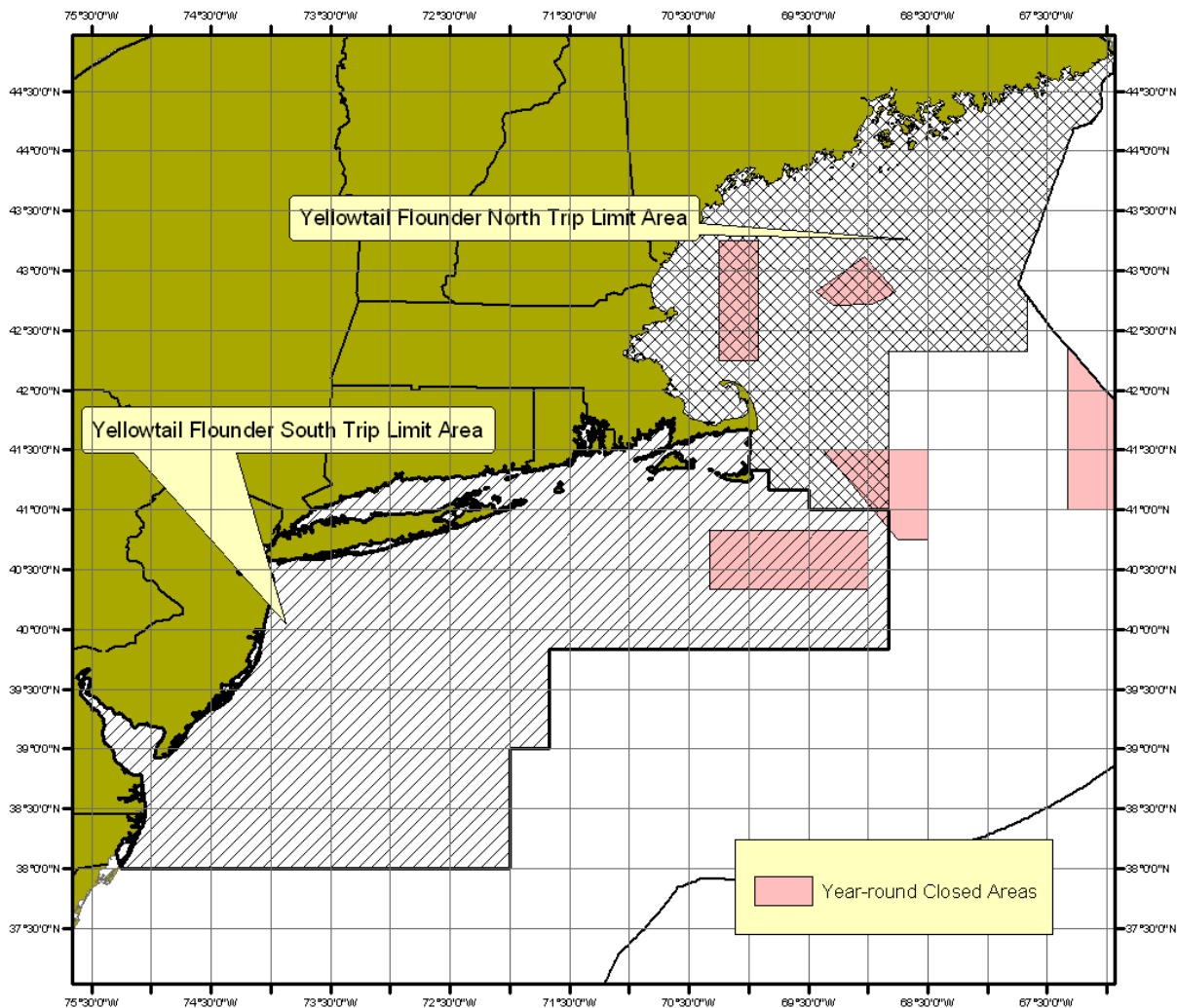
DAS Lessee: the NE multispecies limited access vessel owner and/or the associated vessel that acquires the use of DAS from another NE multispecies limited access vessel.

Q: Can I lease my groundfish DAS to any groundfish DAS vessel?

A: No. You may only lease DAS to or from another groundfish vessel that is similar in size to your vessel. More specifically, a DAS Lessor vessel may only lease DAS to a DAS Lessee vessel (recipient) with a baseline main engine horsepower rating no greater than 20 percent of the baseline engine horsepower of the Lessor vessel and a baseline length overall that is no greater than 10 percent of the baseline length overall of the lessor vessel. [NOAA Fisheries has created an Internet web site that will provide you with a list of vessel baseline specifications as well as vessels that are within the allowable size range for your vessel (www.nero.noaa.gov/ro/doc/das.baseline.htm)].

Q: How do I lease DAS?

A: You must obtain a DAS leasing application form from NOAA Fisheries, and submit the completed application to NOAA Fisheries at least 45 days prior to the time you desire the lease to be effective. You are responsible for finding another vessel owner and negotiating a price for the DAS lease. (www.nero.noaa.gov/ro/doc/das.baseline.htm)



Q: [Can I lease all of my A, B, and C DAS?](#)

A: No. You may only lease Category A DAS.

Q: [Can I lease to or from more than one vessel?](#)

A: Yes. You may lease to or from more than one vessel, as long as you do not sub-lease DAS. For example, if you are the Lessor, and lease out 20 DAS, the person you lease to cannot then lease those 20 DAS to a third vessel owner. However, you may lease 10 DAS to one vessel owner, and your remaining 10 DAS to second vessel owner. Similarly, you may lease DAS from more than one vessel.

Q: [Is there a maximum number of DAS that I can lease \(from other vessels\)?](#)

A: Yes. The maximum number of DAS that you may lease is your DAS allocation in 2001 (Amendment

7 allocation). For example, if you had a Fleet DAS permit (88 DAS), you may lease up to 88 DAS from other vessels. Under this example, the total number of DAS that could be available to you to fish would be 88 DAS *plus* the number of DAS that you are allocated under Amendment 13.

Q: [I have a limited access monkfish Category C permit \(limited access monkfish and limited access NE multispecies permit\) and would like to lease DAS from another vessel. What do I need to know?](#)

A: If you have a limited access monkfish Category C or D permit and you have been allocated less NE multispecies DAS than monkfish DAS, you are allowed to fish these additional monkfish DAS as monkfish only DAS, that is, you may fish these monkfish DAS under the applicable limited access monkfish Category A or B permit category. However, should you acquire additional NE

ATLANTIC HALIBUT

(Applies to Northeast multispecies permit holders)

ONE FISH PER TRIP

multispecies DAS through the DAS Leasing Program, you will be required to use your leased NE multispecies DAS, to the extent that you have them, when fishing under a monkfish DAS. In other words, as a Category C or D vessel, you must always use a NE multispecies DAS when calling in to the monkfish DAS program, should you have them, regardless of whether the NE multispecies DAS were allocated to your vessel or leased from another vessel.

Q: [I have a limited access monkfish Category C permit and would like to lease DAS to another vessel. What do I need to know?](#)

A: If you have a limited access monkfish Category C or D permit and you lease NE multispecies DAS to another vessel, you must forfeit a monkfish DAS for each NE multispecies DAS leased. For example, if you have 40 unused monkfish DAS and 47 allocated NE multispecies DAS, and you lease 10 NE multispecies DAS to another vessel, you would forfeit use of 3 monkfish DAS because you would have 3 fewer NE multispecies DAS than monkfish DAS after the lease.

Q: [If I lease DAS to another vessel, and the Lessee vessel uses the leased DAS, who will get the DAS history and the landings history?](#)

A: Your vessel (Lessor vessel) will be credited with the DAS use history, while the Lessee vessel that landed the fish will be credited with the landings history.

DAS Transfer Program

Q: [How is a DAS transfer different from a DAS lease?](#)

A: Under the DAS Transfer Program, all of a vessel's DAS are indefinitely transferred, whereas DAS

HADDOCK TRIP LIMITS

(Applies to limited access DAS vessels and limited access and open access Handgear permits)

May 1 - September 30	*3,000 pounds per DAS 30,000 pounds per trip
October 1 - April 30	*5,000 pounds per DAS 50,000 pounds per trip

COD TRIP LIMITS

(Applies to limited access DAS vessels when fishing outside of the Eastern U.S./Canada area)

	Gulf of Maine Regulated Mesh Area	Georges Bank Regulated Mesh Area
Limited Access DAS Vessels	800 pounds per DAS 4,000 pounds per trip	1,000 pounds per DAS 10,000 pounds per trip
Limited Access Handgear A Permit	300 pounds per trip	
Open Access Handgear Permit	75 pounds per trip	

leased under the DAS Leasing Program are leased individually and only for a single fishing year. Also, vessels transferring DAS must abide by tonnage restrictions in addition to horsepower and length restrictions. A Lessor may only lease DAS to a Lessee vessel with a baseline tonnage that is no greater than 10 percent of the baseline tonnage of the Lessor vessel.

Q: Who will be able to get a limited access Handgear A permit?

A: Vessels eligible to obtain a limited access Handgear A permit are vessels that were issued an open access Handgear permit during at least 1 fishing year during the fishing years 1997 through 2002, *and* that landed at least separately 500 lb of cod, or haddock, or pollock (not in combination) during the qualifying fishing year based on dealer reports submitted to NOAA Fisheries prior to January 29, 2004.

Q: How much fish can I land with a limited access Handgear A permit?

A: A vessel fishing under the limited access Handgear A permit category may possess and land, per trip, up to 300 lb of cod, in addition to the daily possession limit for other regulated species (the same possession limit for other regulated species as the DAS vessels).

Q: If I am denied a limited access Handgear A permit, may I appeal?

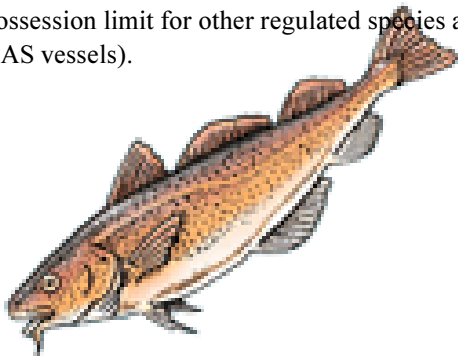
PRIVATE RECREATIONAL AND PARTY/CHARTER RULES FOR COD AND HADDOCK				
		Minimum Size (total length)	Possession Limit	
RECREATIONAL	Cod	22 inches	10 per person per day	
	Haddock	19 inches	no limit	
PARTY/CHARTER	Cod	22 inches	In GOM RMA: 10 per person per day	Areas outside of GOM RMA: no limit
	Haddock	19 inches	no limit	no limit

* For the purposes of determining the per day trip limit for cod for recreational fishing vessels and party/charter vessels, any trip in excess of 15 hours and covering 2 consecutive calendar days will be considered more than 1 day. Similarly, any trip in excess of 39 hours and covering 3 consecutive calendar days will be considered more than 2 days and, so on, in a similar fashion.

A: Yes. You must write and request an appeal of the denial of your limited access Handgear A permit within 30 days from the date of the denial. During the time the appeal is under review you may request a Letter of Authorization that will allow you to fish under the rules associated with a limited access Handgear A permit.

Open Access Handgear Permit

A: Under Amendment 13, a vessel with an open access Handgear permit may retain, per trip, up to 75 lb of cod, in addition to the daily possession limit for other regulated species (the same possession limit for other regulated species as the DAS vessels).



Q: What are the new open access Handgear permit rules?

GEAR RESTRICTIONS BY REGULATED MESH AREAS				
	Gulf of Maine	Georges Bank	Southern Northeast	Mid-Atlantic
MINIMUM MESH SIZE RESTRICTIONS FOR TRAWL GEAR				
Northeast Multispecies Day Gillnet Category*	Roundfish nets 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 50-net allowance; 1 tag/net	All nets 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 50-net allowance; 2 tags/net	All nets 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 50-net allowance; 2 tags/net	Roundfish nets 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh 75-net allowance 2 tags/net
	Flatfish nets 6.5" (16.5" cm) mesh; 100-net allowance; 1 tag/net			Flatfish nets 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh 75-net allowance 2 tags/net
Northeast Multispecies Trip Gillnet Category*	All nets 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 150-net allowance; 1 tag/net	All nets 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 150-net allowance; 1 tag/net	All nets 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance; 2 tags/net	All gillnet gear 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh 75-net allowance 2 tags/net
Monkfish Vessels**	10" (25.4 cm) mesh/150-net allowance			
	1 tag/net			
MINIMUM MESH SIZE RESTRICTIONS FOR TRAWL GEAR				
Codend Only Mesh Size*	6.5" (16.5 cm) diamond or square		7.0" (17.8 cm) diamond or 6.5" (16.5 cm) square	6.5" (16.5 cm) diamond or square
Large Mesh Category - Entire Net	8.5" (21.59 cm) diamond or square			7.5" (19.0 cm) diamond or 8.0" (20.3 cm) square
MAXIMUM NUMBER OF HOOKS AND SIZE RESTRICTIONS FOR HOOK GEAR***				
Limited Access Multispecies Vessels	2,000 hooks	3,600 hooks	2,000 hooks	4,500 hooks (hook gear vessels only)
	No less than 6" (15.2 cm) spacing allowed between the fairlead rollers			
	12/0 circle hooks required for longline gear			N/A

NOAA FISHERIES FACT SHEET

Answers to Commonly Asked Northeast Dealer Reporting and Vessel Trip Identifier Questions

Electronic dealer reporting is intended to replace the paper-based systems that have been in place for decades. Standard Atlantic Fisheries Information System (SAFIS) was designed to provide an easy way for dealers to submit reports electronically. It provides more timely information for evaluating management decisions as well as keeping track of landings of critical quota limited species. It was

developed in conjunction with many of our state partners. Amendment 13 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan includes a requirement for electronic reporting by federally permitted dealers. The specific requirements are in a separate Final Rule that provides all the details regarding electronic reporting. This Final Rule on dealer electronic reporting will also be implemented

on May 1, 2004. For more information regarding Northeast dealer reporting requirements, contact your local port agent, visit the Northeast dealer reporting homepage at: http://www.nero.noaa.gov/dealer_er/ or contact the Statistics Office at 978-281-9212.

General Rule

Q: [When do these changes take effect?](#)

A: All changes are effective on May 1, 2004.

Q: [What are my reporting requirements under the new rule?](#)

A: The basic change is that all NOAA Fisheries permitted dealers with reporting requirements must report their purchases electronically.

Q: [What are the new data element requirements?](#)

A: There are two new data elements that are required by the regulations. These are:
a) Trip Identifier – This is to be received from the vessel for each transaction and is defined as a vessel trip report serial number from one form completed for the trip. If multiple forms are completed for the trip, only one needs to be included.
b) Disposition – This is our standard utilization code for the fish landed. These include food, reduction, pet food, and bait.

Q: [Will NOAA Fisheries accept any paper data after May 1, 2004?](#)

A: No, after this date the only way to meet reporting requirements will be electronically. However, you may continue to submit negative reports on paper until January 1, 2005, if you do not have landings of any species to report.

Q: [How can negative reports be submitted?](#)

A: If you do not purchase or receive any fish for a commercial purpose you may submit the required negative reports on paper to your local field office through January 1, 2005, or electronically through SAFIS. However, if you purchase or receive any fish, these must be reported electronically and all negative reports from then on must be submitted electronically.

Q: [What are the dealer categories?](#)

A: Two dealer categories have been developed. Large dealers are those that purchased \$300,000 or more for all species combined of any species any year from 2000 through 2002. Also, any newly permitted dealers are in this category. Small dealers are defined as those that purchased less than \$300,000 of all species each year during that time period.

Q: [Can I contest which dealer category I have been assigned?](#)

A: If you believe we made an error in your assigned category contact your local field office. They will investigate and respond to you.

Q: [What are the different reporting requirements for large and small dealers?](#)

A: The only difference between the two groups of dealers are that large dealers must submit their reports daily. Small dealers must submit reports at least weekly. Both categories of dealers must submit their reports electronically.

Q: [What if I don't yet have a computer after May 1st? Will I be able to go to my port agent's office to enter data- at least until I can afford one?](#)

A: We are looking at setting up kiosk type computers in many of our field offices for use by dealers during normal business hours. Please contact your local office for more details.

Q: [I'm a surfclam dealer and currently only have to report clams. Do I now have to report all purchases?](#)

A: Yes. The rules for clam dealers are now consistent with those for all other federally permitted dealers. This includes the purchase of inshore clams from federally or non-federally permitted vessels, and any bycatch of other species. However, currently you must use the system designed for offshore clams for those species and SAFIS for all other species.

Q: [Will I still have to report purchases of quota managed species through the IVR system?](#)

A: No. The IVR system will be shut off for dealers to make these reports on May 1. All reporting will be done through SAFIS.

Q: [Will vessels still be required to report through the IVR system?](#)

A: Yes. Those quotas managed through vessel reporting and research set aside landings will continue to be reported through the IVR system.

Q: [What should I do if a vessel does not provide me with the trip identifier?](#)

A: Tell the vessel operator/owner that you cannot purchase or receive the fish.

Q: [If I do not want to report electronically, can I drop my federal permit?](#)

A: You may drop your permit at any time by requesting this in writing from the NMFS-NE Permit and Compliance Team. However, you must maintain a permit to purchase most federally managed species from federally permitted vessels.

Q: [If I drop my federal permit can I get it back?](#)

A: A new permit may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Northeast Permit and Compliance Team by completing and submitting an application. However, any new dealers are automatically classified as a large dealer and thus must report electronically daily.

Q: [If my federal dealer permit lapses, will I be dropped from SAFIS?](#)

A: No. Once you are in SAFIS, your account will be maintained regardless of your permit status.

Reporting Implementation

Q: [How do I report electronically?](#)

A: There are several methods. These include:
i) Web-based keying of data.
ii) Web-based file transfer of data files from your current computer system.
iii) File transfer from an approved state partner reporting system.

Q: [I'm already using SAFIS through a state initiative. Will I keep my same user name and password.](#)

A: Yes.

Q: [Will I receive instructions and training material?](#)

A: Yes, we are in the process of mailing this material out to all permitted dealers.

Q: [I have a computer system that already captures trip level information. Can I use this system to meet my reporting requirements for electronic reporting?](#)

A: Yes, as long as all of the required data elements are available in the system and a standard file can be output. SAFIS has the capability to accept files from a dealer's own computer system.

Q: [Will this reporting meet my state reporting requirements?](#)

A: This system is being developed in coordination with many northeast states. It is the intention that

the system will meet all reporting of landings with the exception of the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Program. However, you should continue to submit your state reports until you receive notification from your state that the electronic reports are acceptable.

Q: [Can I use SAFIS in my local library?](#)

A: You may be able to, but the system requires that specialized software be loaded onto the local machine. Libraries may not allow this.

Q: [I only offload fish from a vessel for shipment to another dealer for sale. Am I required to report these landings?](#)

A: Yes. If you are the first person to receive, for commercial purposes other than solely for transportation, fish from a vessel you are presumed to be a dealer for federal reporting purposes.

System Requirements

Q: [I have a Macintosh computer, will SAFIS work on this?](#)

A: No. Only PC-based computers will work. However, some Macintosh computers can operate as a PC-based/Windows system. Check your user manual for details.

Q: [My computer is running Windows95, will SAFIS work on this?](#)

A: SAFIS may not work on machines running Windows95 or WindowsME or older computers.

Q: [Can I change my password once I log onto SAFIS?](#)

A: Not at this point. The next release will include this ability.

Q: [I buy a species or size category that is not on the SAFIS list. Can I add these?](#)

A: No. Contact your local field office and they will get this added for you.

Q: [If a vessel or fisherman is not on the SAFIS list, how do we add someone?](#)

A: Contact your local field office and they will be able to add them for you.

Q: [Can I leave the fisherman's name blank?](#)

A: NOAA Fisheries does not require the fisherman's name be reported by dealers. However, many state partners do. Since this system is intended to meet all reporting requirements, a state may require this. If they do not, use the "unknown" entry.

Q: [What happens if I lose my connection or the system goes down during a data session?](#)

A: The system will keep any records that have been saved. If a record has not been saved, it will be lost and will have to be reentered.

Q: [I have two locations where I buy fish, these are under the same permit number. Do I have to make two reports?](#)

A: No. Simply report, under your dealer number, each purchase. The port landed field will identify where the fish were landed.

Q: [If I buy fish from a vessel's trip that lands in two different ports, how do I report?](#)

A: You need to make two individual reports. One for each port landed.

Q: [I cannot find all of the names of the fish I purchase in the SAFIS list.](#)

A: Right now we have only the standard common name in the system. If you have a question about what the correct common name is of a species contact your local field office. We are working to put in additional common names. If the species is actually not on the list, it can be added.

Q: [Down the road, can I review data that I put in years ago?](#)

A: Yes, all data will be archived and can be retrieved at any time.

Vessel Reporting

Q: [As a federally permitted vessel, am I required to provide a dealer with my VTR serial number?](#)

A: Yes, as a requirement of offloading your catch to a federally permitted dealer you must also provide that dealer with your vessel name, and either your federal permit number or your hull number, and the serial number from the VTR for the trip you are selling.

Q: [Because I fished in more than one chart area or used more than one gear on a trip, I used more than one VTR. What serial number do I provide to the dealer?](#)

A: The serial number from any one of the VTR's used on a trip may be provided.

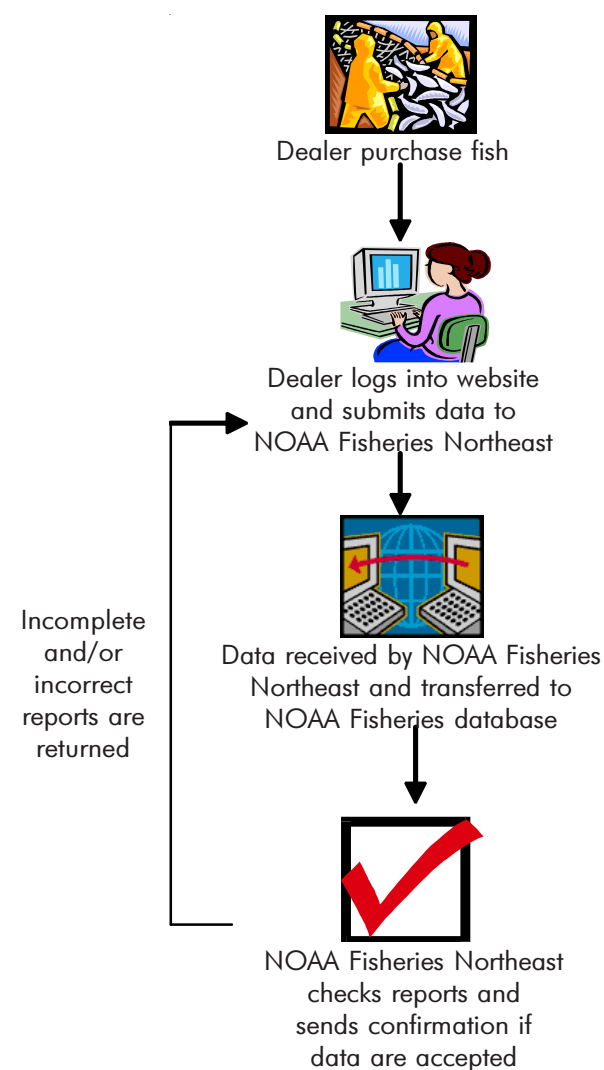
Q: [If I sell non-federally regulated species to a non-federally permitted dealer, do I still have to provide that dealer with my VTR serial number?](#)

A: No.

Q: [I operate an offshore clam vessel, what do I provide the dealer since I do not use the VTR?](#)

A: Provide the dealer with the serial number of the clam report form. This is in the same location as the serial number on the VTR.

How the Dealer Electronic Reporting System will Work



WHAT IS A VESSEL TRIP IDENTIFIER?

Q: [What is the trip identifier?](#)

A: The trip identifier is a unique number assigned to each fishing trip. It is critical to successful fisheries management and is used to link trip-specific information, such as: fishing vessel trip reports (VTR), dealer purchase reports, observer reports, survey data, biological sampling data.

Q: [Why is reporting a trip id necessary?](#)

A: Reporting the trip id is important because it promotes a fully integrated database and provides a more accurate and complete picture of the fisheries. Reporting links fishing effort and location data to the definitive landings reports and enables fisheries scientists and managers to more accurately assess harvest rates and the health of fish stocks in particular areas.

Q: [How will the reporting of the trip id benefit me?](#)

A: The trip id provides a means for improving management strategies, thus improved status of fisheries. In addition, it provides fishing history of vessels for future qualifications.

Q: [What will be used as the trip id?](#)

A: The serial number from the upper right-hand corner of the VTR is the trip id. VTRs are distributed to a particular vessel and should only be used to report fishing activity for that vessel.

Q: [How will dealers get the trip id?](#)

A: Each VTR contains two "Dealer Copy" pages for this purpose. Alternative methods that better accommodate your individual business practices may be used. NOAA Fisheries is available to work with industry to develop alternative methods.